

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/034,168	ITO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Felix E Suarez	2857	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendment filed 13 February 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,3,7 and 9.
3. The drawings filed on 13 February 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1, 3, 7 and 9 are allowable.
2. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of

allowable subject matter:

Claims 1, 3, 7 and 9 are allowable because the prior art, particularly March [U.S. Patent No. 6,490,506], Discenzo [U.S. Patent No 6,546,785], Goldowky [U.S. Patent No 5,924,975] and Hays et al. [U.S. Patent No 6,330,525] fail to teach or suggest a method (or apparatus) for diagnosing abnormality and estimating degradation in a valve apparatus, comprising the steps of:

conducting an analytical diagnosing processing of diagnostic data information for each diagnostic item by referring to an allowance value of each diagnostic item calculated from the specification of said valve apparatus and set in advance, and to a maintenance record inclusive of the diagnostic result to judge whether said valve apparatus is normal or abnormal, said diagnostic data information including at least data about aptitude evaluation of torque of the driving portion, data about aptitude evaluation of seat force of the driving portion, data about aptitude evaluation of sliding drag of the driving portion, data about the aptitude evaluation of time between opening and closing of the valve, data about aptitude evaluation of wear and loosening of said valve apparatus, and data about aptitude evaluation of a limit stop position of the valve.

D

Conclusion

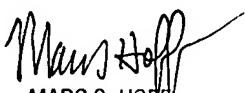
3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Felix Suarez, whose telephone number is (571) 272-2223. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marc Hoff can be reached on (571) 272-2216. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7382 for regular communications and (703) 308-7382 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1782.

March 19, 2004

F.S.



MARC S. HOFF
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2857